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Motorsport Industry turns to AFRL for advancements

by Jill Bohn, AFRL Public Affairs

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, Ohio — The British-based Motorsport Industry Association (MIA) recently visited the Air Force Research Laboratory in search of mutually beneficial technological collaborations for their highly competitive and lucrative industry.

The group made a stop at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base April 9th during an exploratory tour of the United States which included visits to selected NASA sites, leading Aerospace research faculties and other relevant organization. Their mission tour was to focus on a number of technological areas including advanced materials, aerodynamics, control systems, design & manufacturing processes and human performance and identify technology transfer opportunities between the U.S. and United Kingdom.

The motorsports industry must continually explore opportunities to take on new technologies and practices from other leading industry sectors around the world.

Prior to the visit, MIA identified several areas of particular interest and a wish list of possible collaboration areas, and from the list, tours of Air Vehicles, Human Effectiveness, Materials and Manufacturing, and Propulsion directorates were scheduled.

"This visit provides us, the Air Force, and the British the opportunity to mutually benefit through the sharing of expertise in the advancement of technology that contributes to our mission requirements as well as the motorsport industry," said Doug Blair, manager of the AFRL Technology Transfer Program.

AFRL has long been recognized for high-caliber technology and data gathered in research areas. Past auto-racing research by AFRL include the use of a high performance polymer used to protect auto racing spectators from flying debris; and methods to reduce the costs of parts manufacturing, and low-volume production, while producing components of technically superior quality.



SEEKING TECHNOLOGICAL COLLABORATIONS — Dr. Ted Knox from AFRL's Human Effectiveness directorate briefs a trade mission of the Motorsports Industry Association (MIA), the official trade association that represents the UK motorsports industry Monday. Overviews of technology interest areas were given by engineers from six Formula 1 manufacturers. The Trade Mission's agenda included AFRL technology directorates tours and briefings.

Founded in 1994, MIA is the official trade association that serves the UK motorsport sector. The UK represents a leading world position in motorsport engineering and services, with annual sales of nearly \$4.5 billion, of which 60 percent is in overseas earnings and exports. Representing the group were Alcon Components, Cosworth Racing and Williams F1, among other names synonymous with the motorsports industry.

"The British engineers were interested in a number of AFRL's technologies," Blair said. @